

AIR ROUTE A/CDC/MR
 DATE 3/11/53
 DEPT. OF STATE
 SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: **CONFIDENTIAL, DADR**
 NO 80
 ACTION TAKEN: No
 DATE: March 31, 1953
 ACTION: necessary
 4/19/53
 DRS
 S. Bates
 PERIPHERAL: TRANSMITTAL OF REPORT FROM TIRANA
 DEPT. OF STATE, WASHINGTON
 APR 6
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 OTHER
 REVIEWED BY: [initials]
 TO: DC OF PA [initials]
 FROM: [initials]
 SUBJECT: [initials]

Normal life has resumed in Tirana on the second day after Stalin's funeral. The Legation reports that the Albanian Council of Ministers met on March 2 for a 48-hour session.

Stalin's illness was announced over Radio Tirana on the eve of March 4 and was confirmed the following morning through report and Radio dispatches. All propaganda apparatus was immediately put into effect and directed to Tirana and provinces. However, quite apathetic and unconcerned over the Kremlin's fate. On March 9 a well-disciplined group joined Prime Minister Hoxha and knelt before a statue of Stalin in Stenderbeg Square and pronounced jointly the oath of fidelity to the Red Chief including eulogies.

Security forces were considerably reinforced during this period. Police and armed forces patrolled the Tirana streets vigorously while police guards in civilian attire continued a 24-hour survey of the French Legation and the secret service who were constantly near members of the French Legation were tripped.

Several border crossings with the complicity of border police were reported from Scutari on the morning of March 15. The closing of Mirdet road was due only to a severe auto collision instead of security reasons taken by the authorities.

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Desp. No. 1102
From Athens, 3/31/53

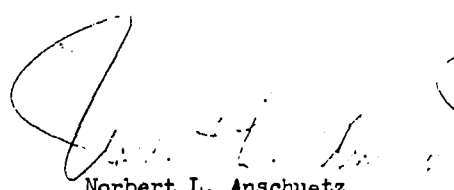
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[C] two reliable sources that Stalin's death had shocked the leading Albanian circles who now believe that Yugoslavia at United States instigation will begin provoking internal revolts after announcing them in advance. Furthermore, the same circles believe that confusion which exists in Moscow will not permit the Kremlin to change its policy towards Washington. However should there be a grand-scale revolt, Albania will be the first to restore itself to its former liberties. The Minister states in conclusion that the hypothesis of a rumored divided Albania is generally approved since three quarters of the population hate the present regime.

For the Ambassador:


Norbert L. Anschuetz
First Secretary of Embassy

Copies to: GTI
Salonica

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